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CANADA
THE MASK

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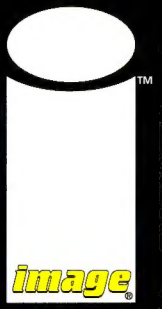
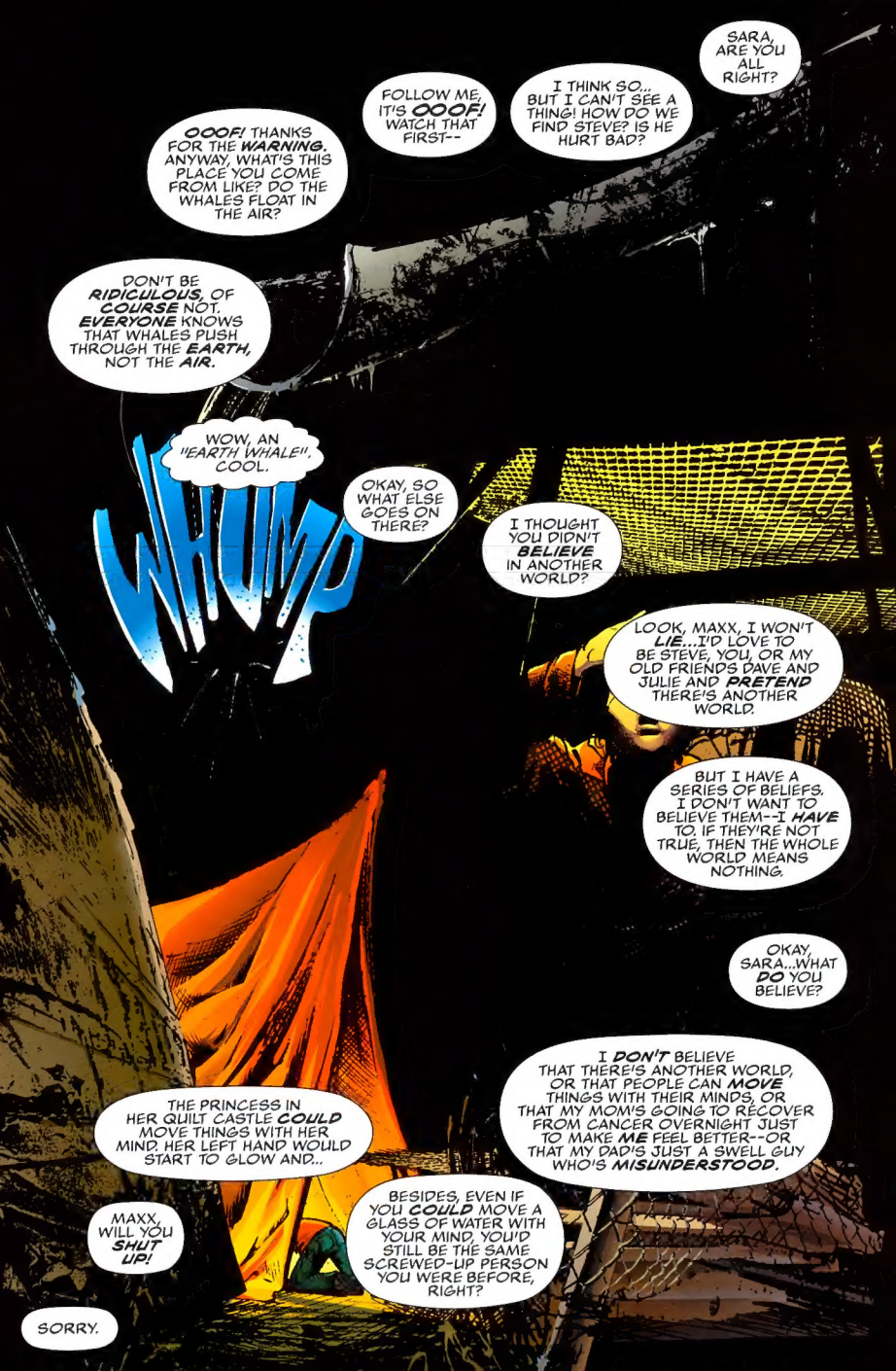


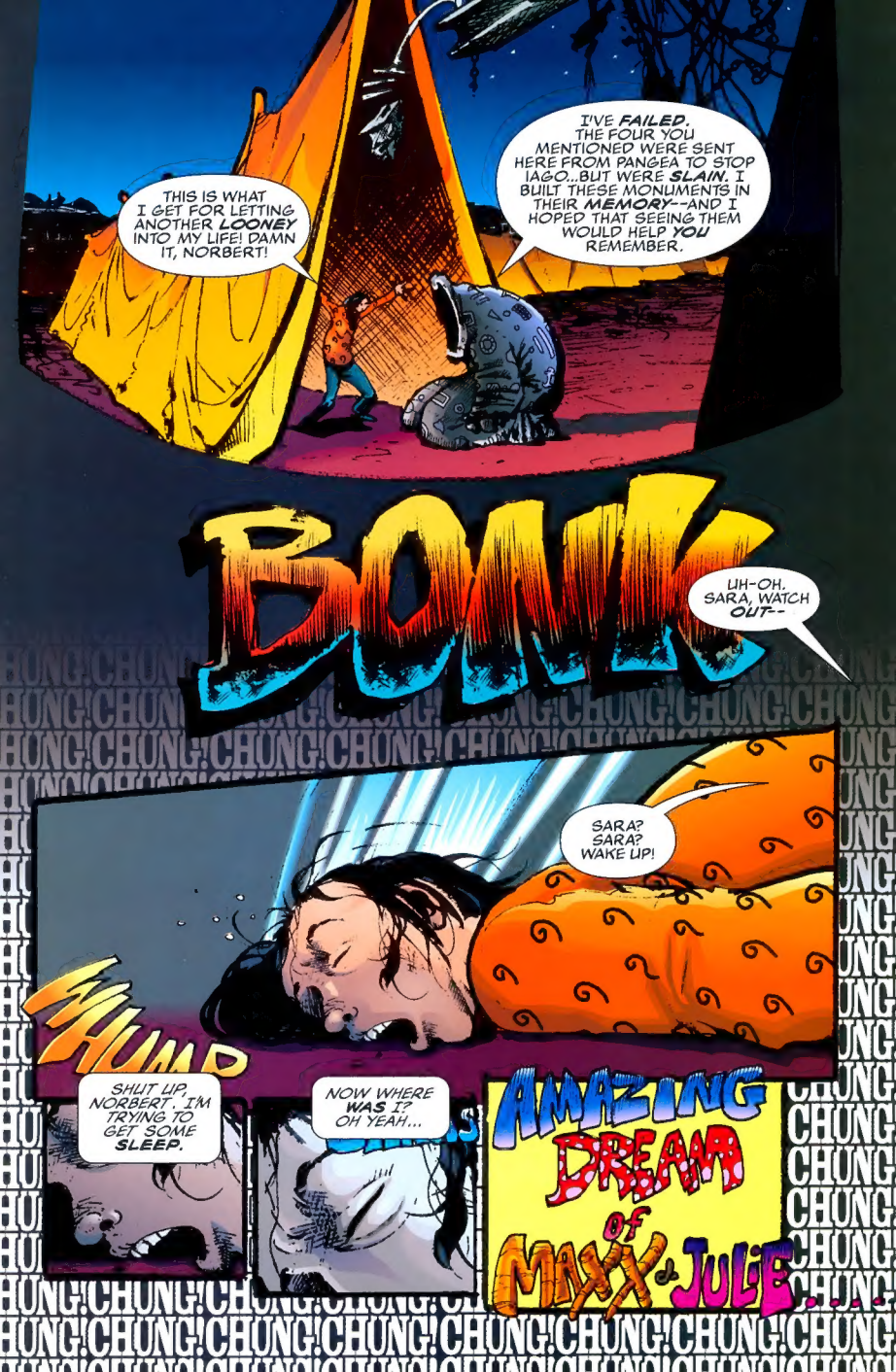
HAVING
TO
BELIEVE
SARA, ARE YOU AWAKE?
I AM NOW...
I'M HERE TO SHOW YOU PANGEA.
AT 3 A.M.?
YES.
CAN'T THIS WAIT UNTIL MORNING?
IT'S THE ONLY WAY TO STOP IAGO THE SLUG FROM KILLING AGAIN.
LOOK, NORBERT... I DUNNO...
SARA, IF I TOLD YOU THAT STEVE WAS HURT AND NEEDED YOUR HELP, AND I COULD TAKE YOU TO HIM, WOULD YOU COME WITH ME THEN?
OF COURSE NOT. YOU'RE VERY DISCRIMINATING.
-SIGH-
I DON'T GET OUT OF BED IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT FOR JUST ANYBODY...
OKAY, I CHECKED... HE'S NOT IN BED, BUT YOU BETTER NOT BE SCREWING WITH ME, NORBERT...

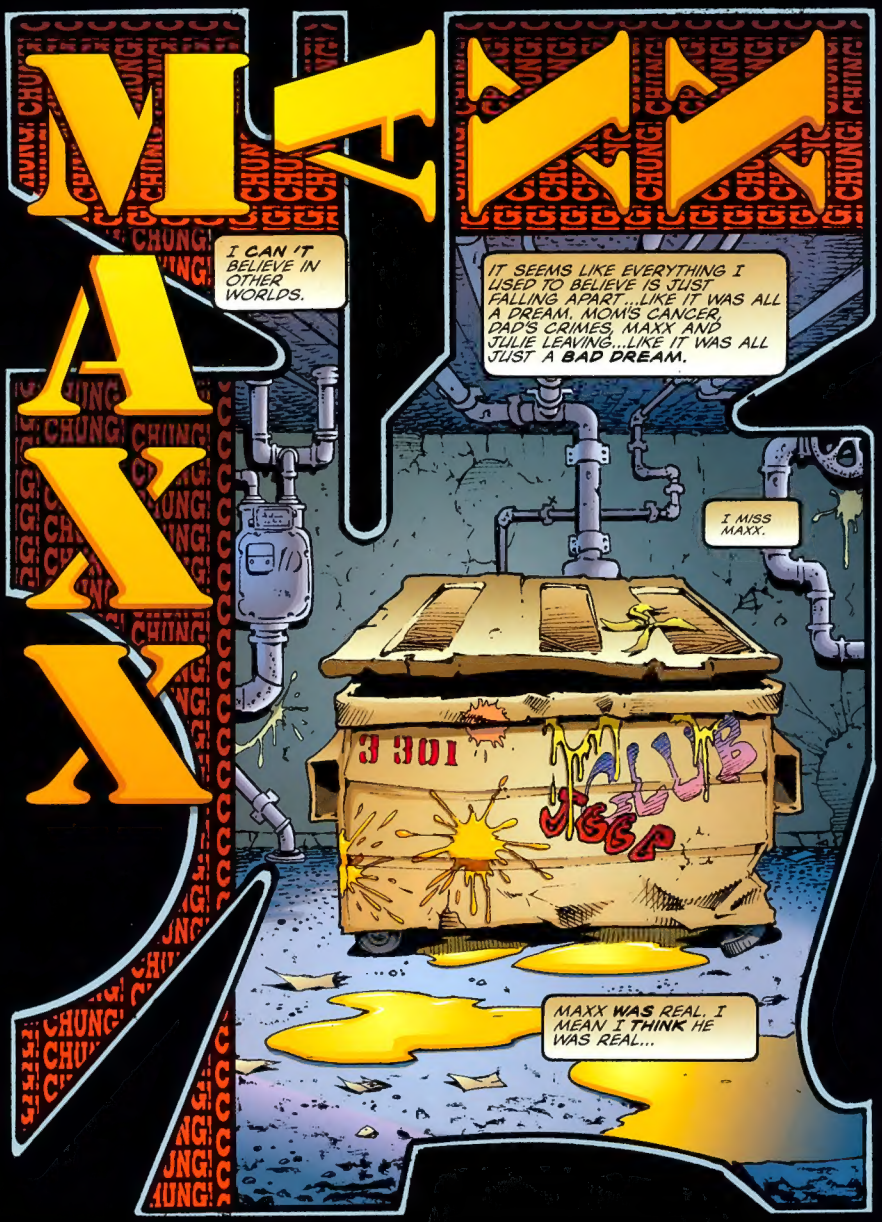
SARA, YOU'RE ABOUT TO ENTER A MAGICAL PLACE.
WE'RE HOME.
IN PANGEA THIS AREA ISN'T A JUNKYARD, BUT A POWER SPOT. CAN YOU FEEL IT?
A JUNKYARD...?
I FEEL COLD...AND LIKE I'M ABOUT TO BURST.
YES. I ALSO FEEL COLD AND EMPTY IN THIS PLACE...
NO, I'M FREEZING AND I HAVE TO PEE.
OH.
I CHOSE THIS SPOT TO REBUILD THE WORLD I CAME FROM, PANGEA.
AND THAT'S WHERE WE'LL FIND STEVE?
COME, SARA. WE MUST TRAVEL AS CHILDREN UPON OUR HANDS AND KNEES THROUGH THE CASTLE OF QUILTS.
THERE YOU WILL SEE THE FIRST FOUR, WHO WERE SENT BEFORE ME TO STOP IAGO. BUT ALL FAILED.
WHEN YOU LOOK UPON THEIR FACES, YOU WILL REMEMBER THEM, AND WILL RETURN TO PANGEA.
THUNDERPIG! LOOK OUT! SARA, DUCK!
WHAT?! I DON'T SEE--
WHUMP
WE'LL BE SAFE DOWN HERE. THUNDERPIGS ARE FOOLISH AND AFRAID. THEY WILL NOT JUMP DOWN A HOLE IF THEY DO NOT KNOW WHERE IT LEADS.
UNLIKE US.

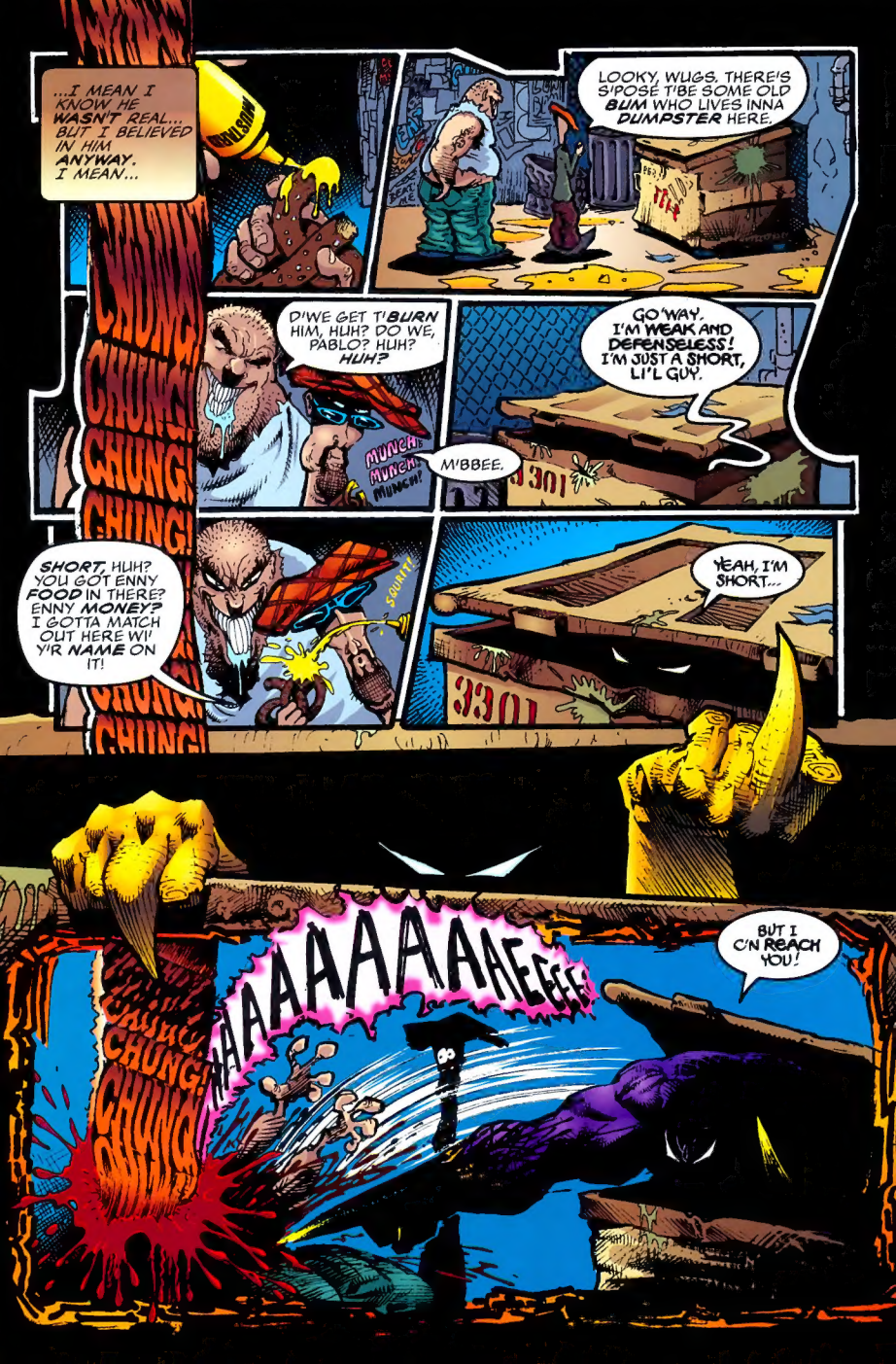

SARA, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
I THINK SO... BUT I CAN'T SEE A THING! HOW DO WE FIND STEVE? IS HE HURT BAD?
FOLLOW ME, IT'S OOOF! WATCH THAT FIRST--
OOOF! THANKS FOR THE WARNING. ANYWAY, WHAT'S THIS PLACE YOU COME FROM LIKE? DO THE WHALES FLOAT IN THE AIR?
DON'T BE RIDICULOUS, OF COURSE NOT. EVERYONE KNOWS THAT WHALES PUSH THROUGH THE EARTH, NOT THE AIR.
WOW, AN "EARTH WHALE". COOL.
WHUMP
OKAY, SO WHAT ELSE GOES ON THERE?
I THOUGHT YOU DIDN'T BELIEVE IN ANOTHER WORLD?
LOOK, MAXX, I WON'T LIE...I'D LOVE TO BE STEVE, YOU, OR MY OLD FRIENDS DAVE AND JULIE AND PRETEND THERE'S ANOTHER WORLD.
BUT I HAVE A SERIES OF BELIEFS. I DON'T WANT TO BELIEVE THEM--I HAVE TO. IF THEY'RE NOT TRUE, THEN THE WHOLE WORLD MEANS NOTHING.
OKAY, SARA...WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE?
I DON'T BELIEVE THAT THERE'S ANOTHER WORLD, OR THAT PEOPLE CAN MOVE THINGS WITH THEIR MINDS, OR THAT MY MOM'S GOING TO RECOVER FROM CANCER OVERNIGHT JUST TO MAKE ME FEEL BETTER--OR THAT MY DAD'S JUST A SWELL GUY WHO'S MISUNDERSTOOD.
THE PRINCESS IN HER QUILT CASTLE COULD MOVE THINGS WITH HER MIND. HER LEFT HAND WOULD START TO GLOW AND...
BESIDES, EVEN IF YOU COULD MOVE A GLASS OF WATER WITH YOUR MIND, YOU'D STILL BE THE SAME SCREWED-UP PERSON YOU WERE BEFORE, RIGHT?
MAXX, WILL YOU SHUT UP!
SORRY.

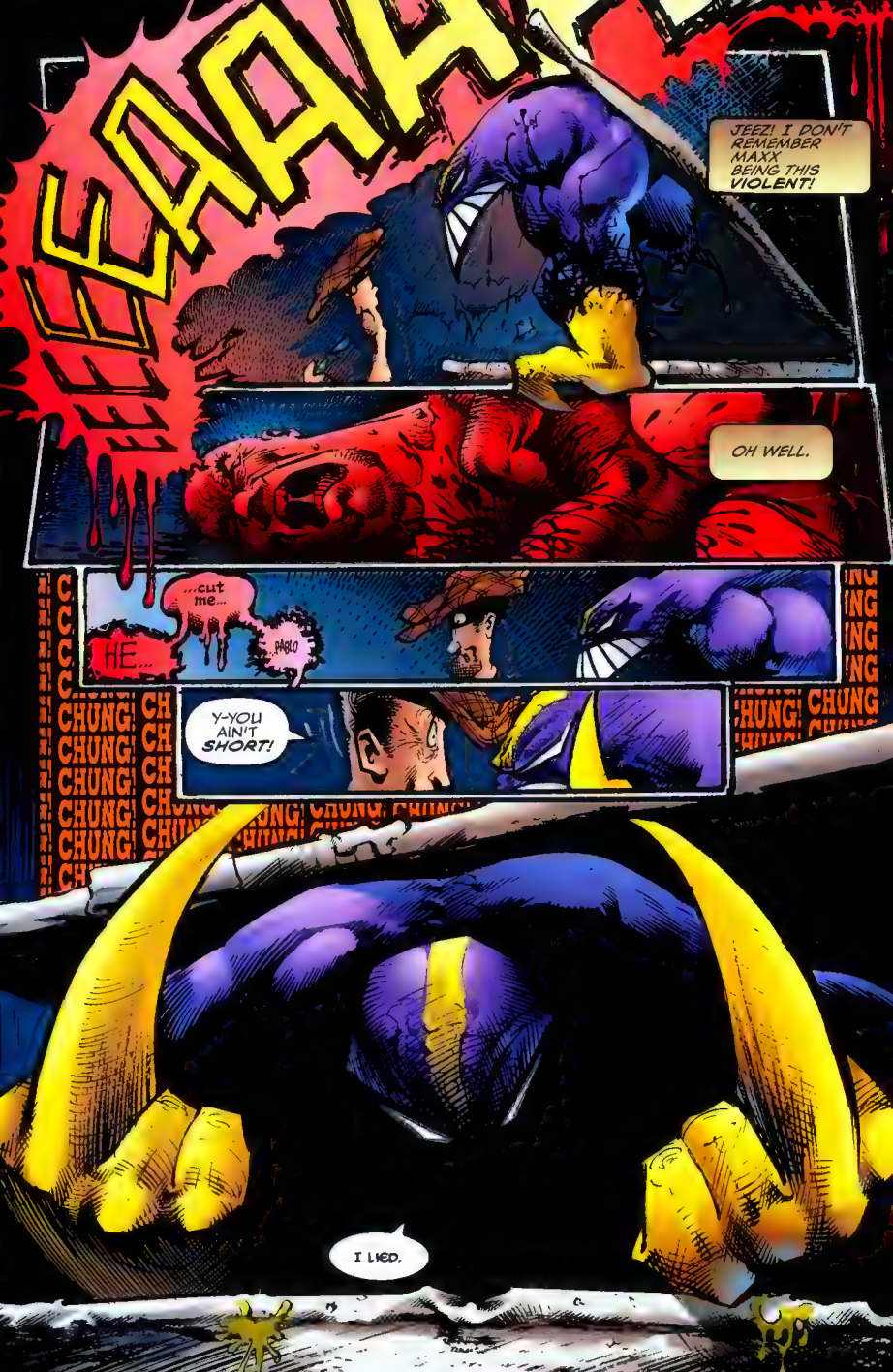
KEEP GOING, WE'RE ALMOST THERE! CAN YOU FEEL THE MAGIC, MY PRINCESS?
OH, YEAH. CRAWLING ON MY HANDS AND KNEES THROUGH GARBAGE ALWAYS MAKES ME FEEL MAGICAL.
A CYNICAL ATTITUDE MASKS A BROKEN HEART.
DEEP.
NOW YOU'RE SURE HE'S RIGHT HERE, MAXX? WAIT-- I THINK I SEE THE OPENING...
YOU'VE MADE IT, MY PRINCESS. YOU'RE IN PANGEA!
I DON'T BELIEVE IT. MY CHILDHOOD TOYS. I HAVEN'T SEEN THEM SINCE I WAS A LITTLE GIRL!
PUMPKIN!
MR. YAKITY-TAKITY!
POOCHIE!
AND MR. DIAL-A-DOODLE!
THEY'RE REAL--
--AND THEY'RE HUGE!

HEY WAAAIIT A MINUTE! I MUST BE LOSING MY MARBLES!
SARA, WAIT! YOU'RE SLIPPING BACK!
IT'S JUST JUNK! A CHEESY STONEHEDGE BUILT TO LOOK LIKE MY OLD TOYS!
BUT WHY, NORBERT? AND WHERE THE HELL IS STEVE?
YOU DON'T EVEN KNOW WHERE STEVE IS, DO YOU? HE'S PROBABLY OUT BOOZING IT UP WITH SKYE.
BOY, AM I A SUCKER.

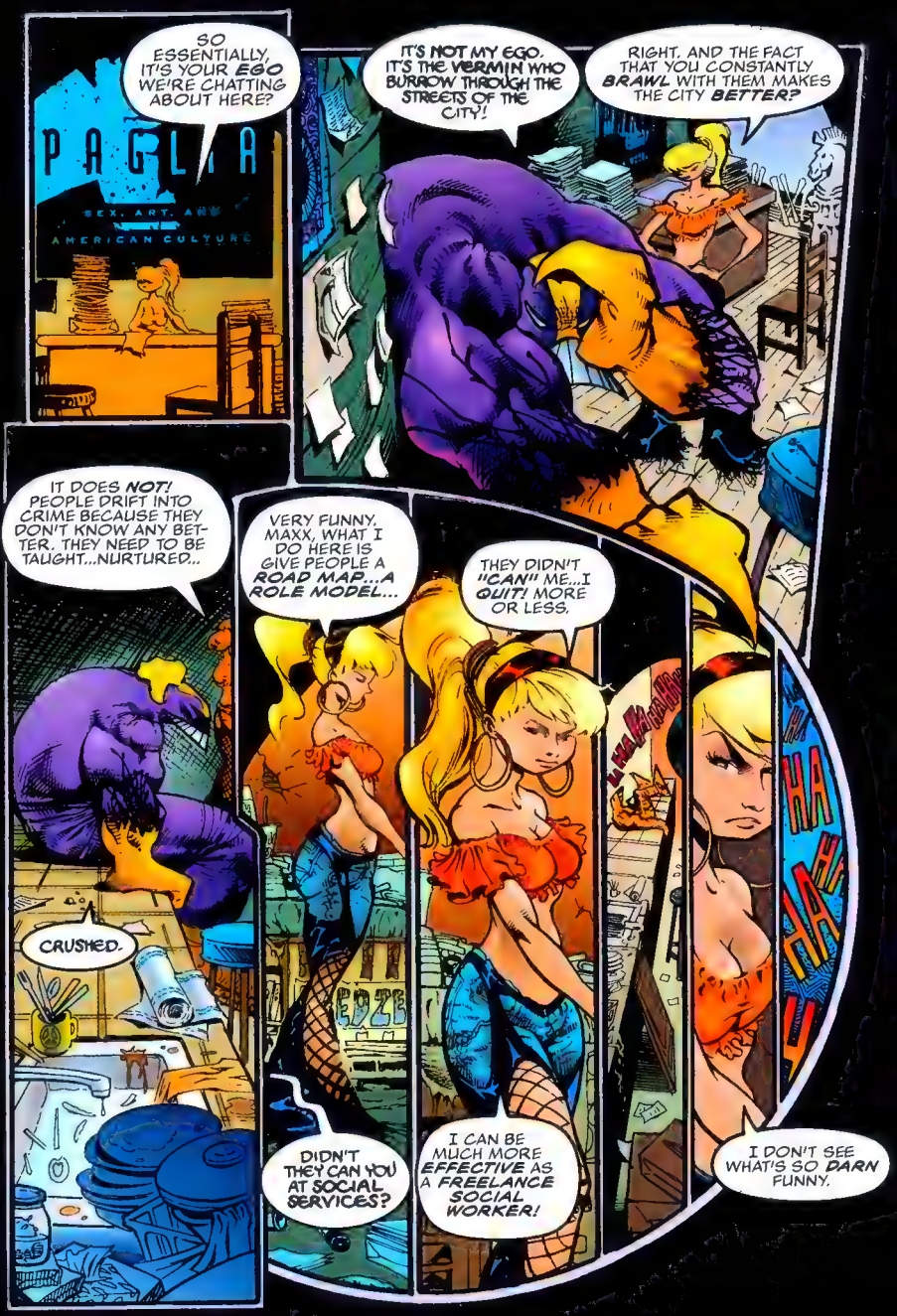

THIS IS WHAT I GET FOR LETTING ANOTHER LOONEY INTO MY LIFE! DAMN IT, NORBERT!
I'VE FAILED. THE FOUR YOU MENTIONED WERE SENT HERE FROM PANGEA TO STOP IAGO...BUT WERE SLAIN. I BUILT THESE MONUMENTS IN THEIR MEMORY--AND I HOPED THAT SEEING THEM WOULD HELP YOU REMEMBER.
BONK
UH-OH. SARA, WATCH OUT--
SARA? SARA? WAKE UP!
HUMD
SHUT UP, NORBERT. I'M TRYING TO GET SOME SLEEP.
NOW WHERE WAS I? OH YEAH...
AMAZING DREAM of MAXX & JULIE
CHUNG!

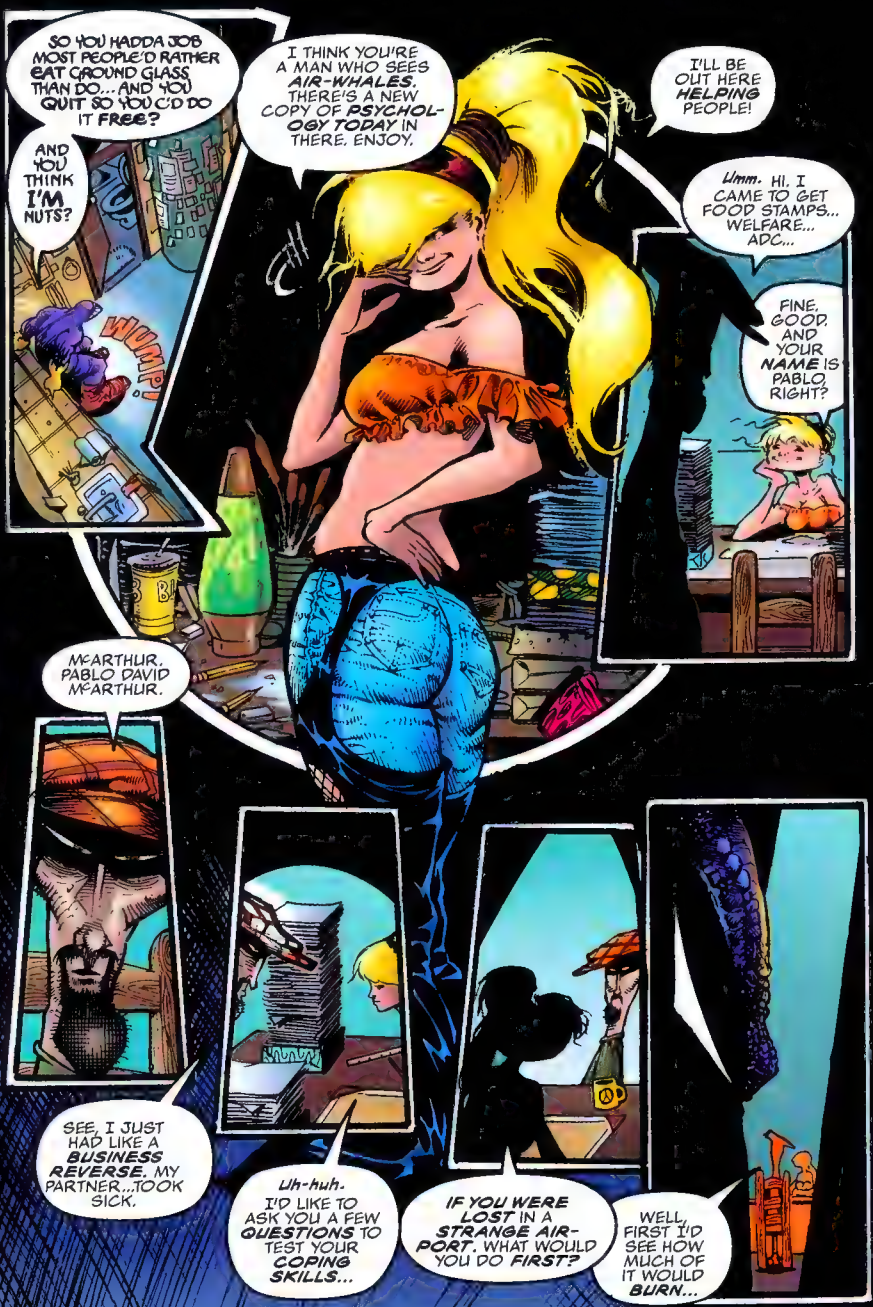

MAXX
I CAN'T BELIEVE IN OTHER WORLDS.
IT SEEMS LIKE EVERYTHING I USED TO BELIEVE IS JUST FALLING APART...LIKE IT WAS ALL A DREAM. MOM'S CANCER, DAD'S CRIMES, MAXX AND JULIE LEAVING...LIKE IT WAS ALL JUST A BAD DREAM.
I MISS MAXX.
3 301
MAXX WAS REAL, I MEAN I THINK HE WAS REAL...


...I MEAN I KNOW HE WASN'T REAL... BUT I BELIEVED IN HIM ANYWAY. I MEAN...
CHUNG!
LOOKY, WUGS. THERE'S S'POSE T'BE SOME OLD BUM WHO LIVES INNA DUMPSTER HERE.
D'WE GET T'BURN HIM, HUH? DO WE, PABLO? HUH? HUH?
MUNCH-MUNCH-MUNCH!
M'BBEE.
GO 'WAY. I'M WEAK AND DEFENSELESS! I'M JUST A SHORT, LI'L GUY.
SHORT, HUH? YOU GOT ENNY FOOD IN THERE? ENNY MONEY? I GOTTA MATCH OUT HERE WI' Y'R NAME ON IT!
SQUIRT!
YEAH, I'M SHORT...
CHUNG!
AAAAAAAEEEE!
BUT I C'N REACH YOU!

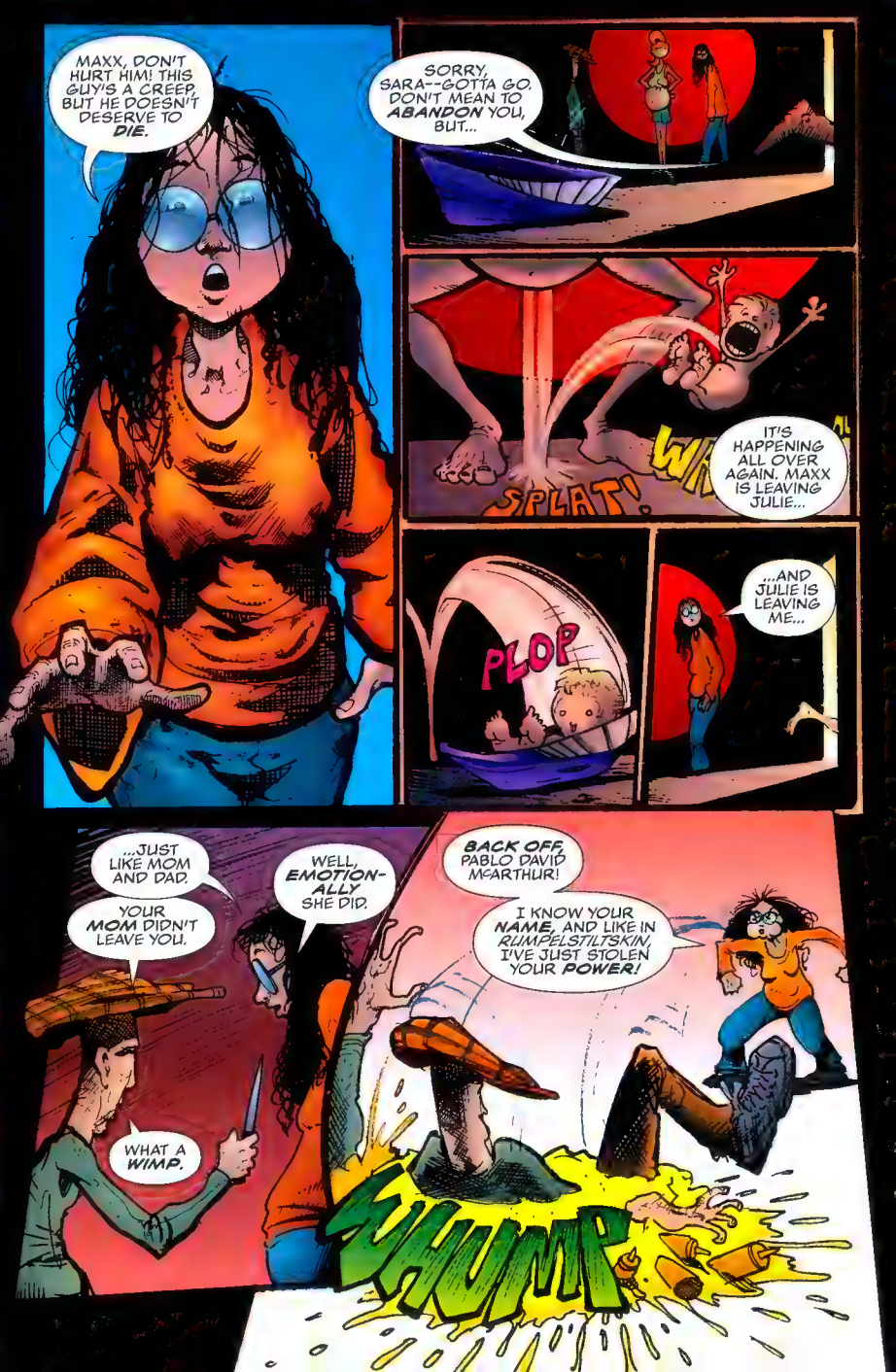

SHEEAAR
JEEZ! I DON'T REMEMBER MAXX BEING THIS VIOLENT!
OH WELL.
HE...
...cut me...
PABLO
CHUNG!
Y-YOU AIN'T SHORT!
I LIED.

YOU AIN'T GETTIN' ME!
SPLAT
WHAM
WHAM
WHAM
WHAM
WHAM
WHAM
NOBODY GETS PABLO McARTHUR!
GOTTA GET AWAY! GOTTA GET HELP!
BOY, THAT MUST'VE HURT!
BUT WHAT WAS WORSE...
...WAS THE HUMILIATION!
THE CITY'S HERO.
BEATEN BY ONE GUY.
WITH A GARBAGE CAN LID!
NOW THAT'S THE MAXX I REMEMBER!


SO ESSENTIALLY, IT'S YOUR EGO WE'RE CHATTING ABOUT HERE?
PAGLIA
SEX, ART, AND AMERICAN CULTURE
IT'S NOT MY EGO. IT'S THE VERMIN WHO BURROW THROUGH THE STREETS OF THE CITY!
RIGHT. AND THE FACT THAT YOU CONSTANTLY BRAWL WITH THEM MAKES THE CITY BETTER?
IT DOES NOT! PEOPLE DRIFT INTO CRIME BECAUSE THEY DON'T KNOW ANY BETTER. THEY NEED TO BE TAUGHT...NURTURED...
CRUSHED.
VERY FUNNY, MAXX, WHAT I DO HERE IS GIVE PEOPLE A ROAD MAP...A ROLE MODEL...
THEY DIDN'T "CAN" ME...I QUIT! MORE OR LESS.
DIDN'T THEY CAN YOU AT SOCIAL SERVICES?
I CAN BE MUCH MORE EFFECTIVE AS A FREELANCE SOCIAL WORKER!
I DON'T SEE WHAT'S SO DARN FUNNY.

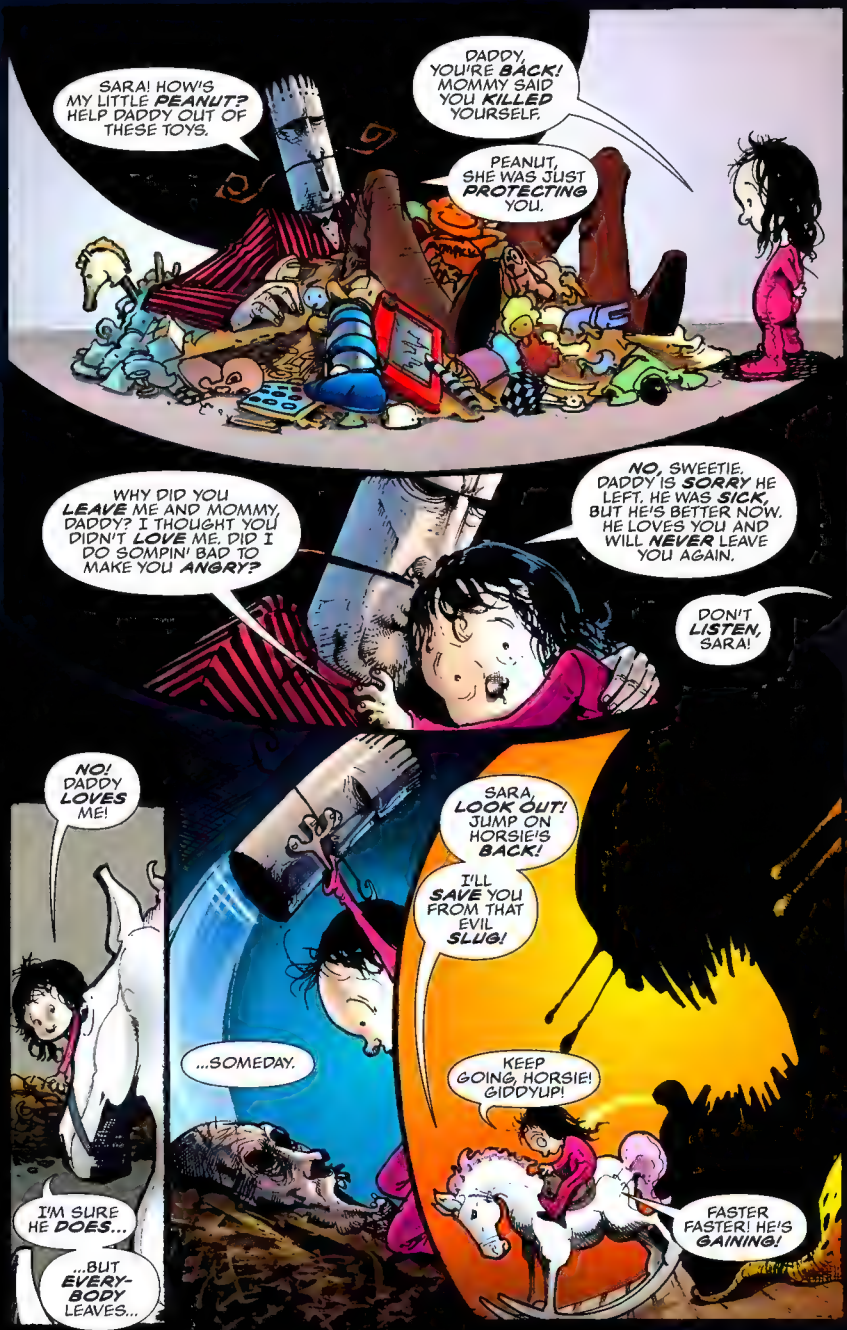

SO YOU HADDA JOB MOST PEOPLE'D RATHER EAT GROUND GLASS THAN DO... AND YOU QUIT SO YOU C'D DO IT FREE?
AND YOU THINK I'M NUTS?
WUMP!
I THINK YOU'RE A MAN WHO SEES AIR-WHALES. THERE'S A NEW COPY OF PSYCHOLOGY TODAY IN THERE. ENJOY.
I'LL BE OUT HERE HELPING PEOPLE!
Umm. HI. I CAME TO GET FOOD STAMPS... WELFARE... ADC...
FINE. GOOD. AND YOUR NAME IS PABLO, RIGHT?
McARTHUR. PABLO DAVID McARTHUR.
SEE, I JUST HAD LIKE A BUSINESS REVERSE. MY PARTNER...TOOK SICK.
Uh-huh. I'D LIKE TO ASK YOU A FEW QUESTIONS TO TEST YOUR COPING SKILLS...
IF YOU WERE LOST IN A STRANGE AIR-PORT. WHAT WOULD YOU DO FIRST?
WELL, FIRST I'D SEE HOW MUCH OF IT WOULD BURN...

LOOK OUT, JULIE! HE HAS MUSTARD AND HE KNOWS HOW TO USE IT!
YOU CAN'T HIDE FROM ME, PABLO!
YOU CAN'T TOUCH ME. I'M IN A SOCIAL WORKER'S OFFICE.
OKAY, MAYBE YOU CAN. BUT THAT DOESN'T MAKE IT RIGHT.
EVERYBODY FREEZE!


MAXX, DON'T HURT HIM! THIS GUY'S A CREEP, BUT HE DOESN'T DESERVE TO DIE.
SORRY, SARA--GOTTA GO. DON'T MEAN TO ABANDON YOU, BUT...
SPLAT!
IT'S HAPPENING ALL OVER AGAIN. MAXX IS LEAVING JULIE...
PLOP
...AND JULIE IS LEAVING ME...
...JUST LIKE MOM AND DAD.
YOUR MOM DIDN'T LEAVE YOU.
WELL, EMOTIONALLY SHE DID.
WHAT A WIMP.
BACK OFF, PABLO DAVID McARTHUR!
I KNOW YOUR NAME, AND LIKE IN RUMPELSTILTSKIN, I'VE JUST STOLEN YOUR POWER!
WHUMP

MY NAME'S NOT RUMPEL-SCUMBLEDON.
WHO CARES! YOU'RE JUST LIKE EVERY STRANGE MAN MOM WARNED ME ABOUT--SEEDY, UNSHAVEN AND FULL OF MUSTARD!
MUSTARD
MOVE OVER!
HEY!
NOT ALL MEN--SOME ARE SAFE AND CUDDLY AND FULL OF KETCHUP!
WATCH IT!
OUCH!
YOU'RE YELLOW INSIDE AND OUT! OKAY, WHAT'S YOUR REAL NAME? AND DON'T MAKE ME SQUEEZE IT OUT OF YOU!
SARA, YOU'VE GOT ME ALL WRONG. I'M A VICTIM OF SOCIETY. I CAN'T BE HELD PERSONALLY RESPONSIBLE FOR MY ACTIONS.
DON'T LISTEN, SARA! HE'S LYING!
MY HORSIE! NORBERT!
HIS FACE IS A MASK! TAKE IT OFF AND HE'LL TELL YOU HIS REAL NAME!
YOU

I FORGIVE YOU, MR. GONE
I DON'T
I DO.
I SEE IT YOUR WAY, BUT I'M STILL PRETTY PISSED OFF.
I WANT YOU TO ROT IN HELL, YOU PATHETIC WORM.
GEE, SARA... MY OWN VICTIMS CAN'T DECIDE AMONG THEMSELVES WHETHER TO FORGIVE ME OR NOT.
THE IRONY IS, THERE'S ONLY ONE PERSON I WANT FORGIVENESS FROM, BUT MY DEFENSE ARE TOO STRONG. I'M NOT ABOUT TO ADMIT VULNERABILITY WHILE I'M MR. GONE. YOU WOULDN'T BELIEVE IT.
DON'T STOP HERE, SARA, KEEP GOING! PEEL BACK ANOTHER LAYER!
HIS FACE IS ANOTHER MASK!
DADDY?

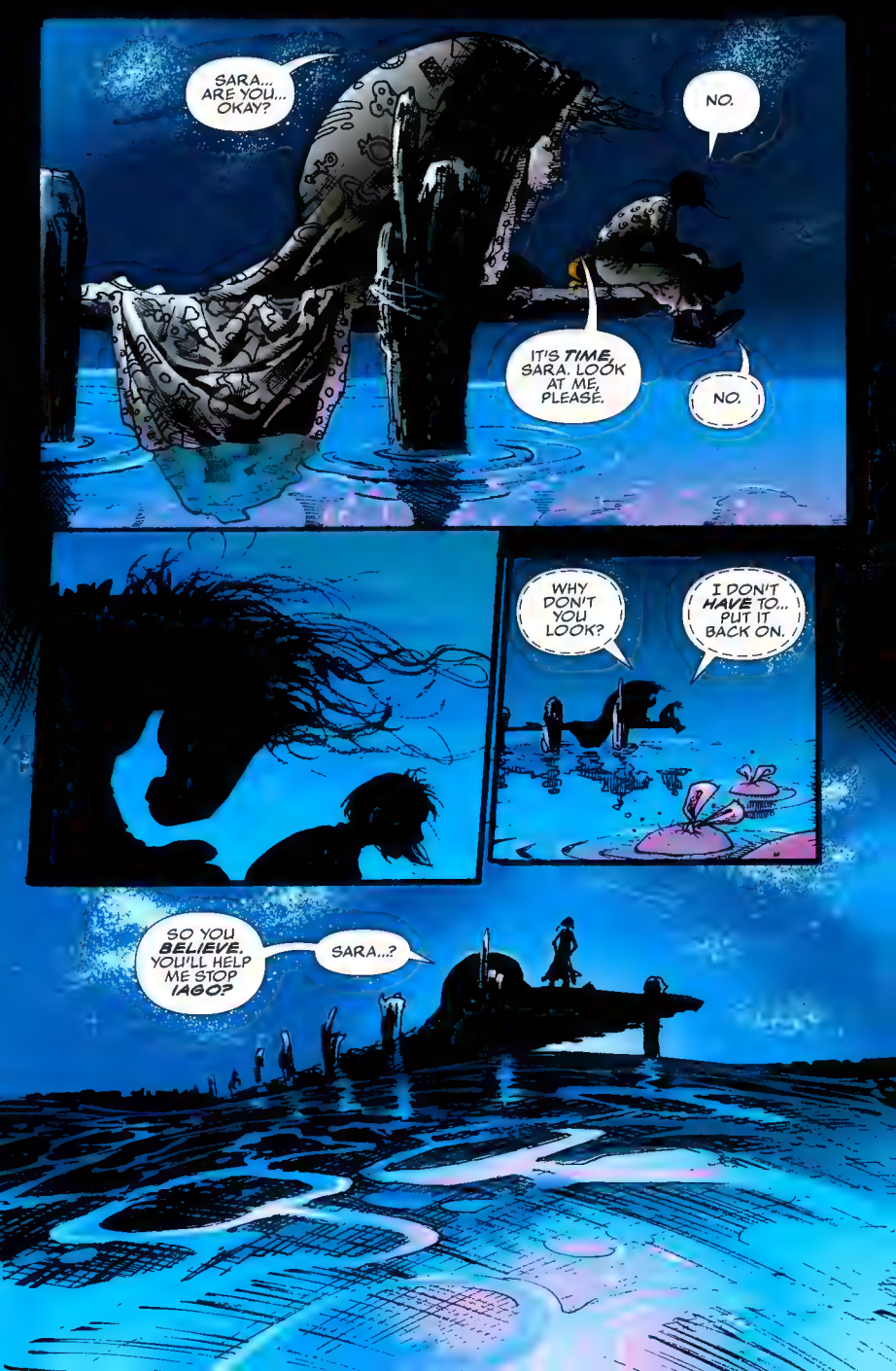

SARA! HOW'S MY LITTLE PEANUT? HELP DADDY OUT OF THESE TOYS.
DADDY, YOU'RE BACK! MOMMY SAID YOU KILLED YOURSELF.
PEANUT, SHE WAS JUST PROTECTING YOU.
WHY DID YOU LEAVE ME AND MOMMY, DADDY? I THOUGHT YOU DIDN'T LOVE ME. DID I DO SOMPIN' BAD TO MAKE YOU ANGRY?
NO, SWEETIE. DADDY IS SORRY HE LEFT. HE WAS SICK, BUT HE'S BETTER NOW. HE LOVES YOU AND WILL NEVER LEAVE YOU AGAIN.
DON'T LISTEN, SARA!
NO! DADDY LOVES ME!
I'M SURE HE DOES...
...BUT EVERY-BODY LEAVES...
...SOMEDAY.
SARA, LOOK OUT! JUMP ON HORSIE'S BACK!
I'LL SAVE YOU FROM THAT EVIL SLUG!
KEEP GOING, HORSIE! GIDDYUP!
FASTER FASTER! HE'S GAINING!

DON'T STOP...HORSIE... KEEP GOING...
HUH? WHAT A FREAKY NIGHTMARE!
WELL...THIS IS KIND OF AWKWARD. AT LEAST ME AND NORBERT ARE THE ONLY ONES HERE...
SARA! YOU'RE AWAKE! FINALLY!
WHAT HAPPENED?
LISTEN--- IT'S NONE OF MY BUSINESS, BUT DON'T THINK IT'S KIND OF DANGEROUS TO GO OUT IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT TO A JUNKYARD AND GET HIT ON THE HEAD?
WE WERE LOOKING FOR YOU, YOU IDIOT.
ANYWAY, THAT GUY BROUGHT YOU HERE IN THE RAIN AND PROBABLY SAVED YOUR LIFE.
I GUESS HE'S 0-FOR-2 BETWEEN THE TWO OF US.
YEAH, I GUESS SO...

LISTEN, YOUR MOM CALLED. SHE WAS PRETTY GROGGY FROM PAIN KILLERS...
...BUT SHE SAID YOUR GRANDDAD, WAS BURIED, NOT CREMATED!
SO WHAT'S YOUR DAD UP TO, LYING ABOUT THE URN?
I KNEW THERE WAS SOMETHING PSYCHIC GOING ON WITH THAT THING...
SNORT SNORT
...WISH I COULD GET THE LID OFF...MAYBE WITH MY MIND.

THIS ISN'T HAPPENING. EVEN IF THERE WAS A HORSIE UNDER THIS BLANKET AND I COULD MOVE THINGS WITH MY MIND, I'M STILL THE SAME OLD SCREWED-UP SARA, RIGHT?
IT DOESN'T MEAN EVERY-THING I BELIEVE IS CRAP.
OF COURSE NOT. THEN WHY AM I STILL SHAKING?
SARA, COME WITH ME TO THE PIER. I'LL PROVE IAGO EXISTS.
WELL...
YEAH, LET'S GO TO THE PIER!
AND SO...
A SKIRT? I DON'T THINK I'VE EVER SEEN HER IN A SKIRT...
ME EITHER. INTERESTING...
WILL YOU TWO KNOCK IT OFF! EVERYTHING ELSE IS DIRTY!
I DON'T WANT IT IN THE HOUSE. GOD KNOWS WHAT'S IN IT.
WHY'D YOU BRING THE URN?

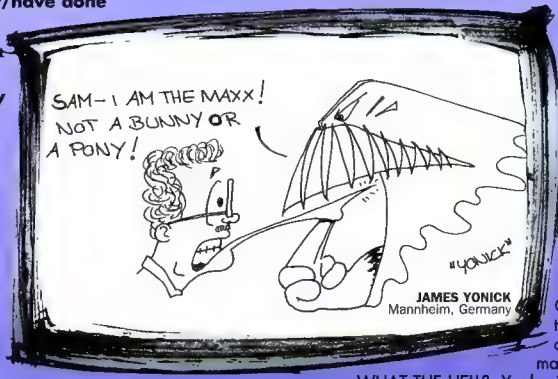
SO, NORBERT, YOU SAY YOU'RE ACTUALLY A "PART OF SARA'S PSYCHE" THAT CAME INTO OUR WORLD TO STOP A KILLER SLUG?
AND SARA'S A PRINCESS WHO MOVES THINGS WITH HER MAGIC HAND?
I WOULDN'T POINT FINGERS, STEVE.
LOOK, I KNOW YOU SEE ME OUT THERE EXPLORING PSYCHIC PHENOMENA, AND YOU GUYS WANT IN ON IT TOO. BUT YOU GOTTA UNDERSTAND I'M A TRAINED PROFESSIONAL. YOU GUYS ARE GONNA NEED MY HELP.
SO WHAT'S YOUR ADVICE?
LET'S CALL IT A NIGHT AND GO HOME FOR CEREAL AND PIZZA. WE NEED TO REPLENISH OUR PSYCHIC ENERGY.
STEVE, YOU'RE FIRED.
LOOK, THE TRUTH IS, YOU GUYS DON'T EVEN HAVE PSYCHIC ABILITIES! I'M THE ONE WHO DESERVES ESP AND MIND POWER. WHY DOES THIS ALWAYS HAVE TO BE ABOUT YOU, SARA? I'M THE ONE WHO'S STUDIED--
LOOK, STEVE, I CAN'T HELP IT IF I'VE GOT A GUY WHO FOLLOWS ME AROUND THINKING I'M MORE PSYCHIC THAN YOU-- I'M SORRY, BUT DEAL WITH IT! IF I BELIEVED FOR A MINUTE THAT I REALLY DID HAVE MAGIC POWERS I'D GIVE THEM TO YOU RIGHT NOW, OKAY?! HAPPY?
STEVE, WAIT--AW, GEEZ...


SARA... ARE YOU... OKAY?
NO.
IT'S TIME, SARA. LOOK AT ME, PLEASE.
NO.
WHY DON'T YOU LOOK?
I DON'T HAVE TO... PUT IT BACK ON.
SO YOU BELIEVE. YOU'LL HELP ME STOP IAGO?
SARA...?

OK—next issue (April) is Friends of Maxx #1. We already talked about that last issue; every third issue this year will be like a little detour from Maxx. These are stories that don't fit in the regular continuity, but ones that I wanted to tell anyway. Now don't write me a bunch of letters saying WHERE THE HELL IS MAXX? That's the point—he's on vacation. (Note: The Maxx that introduces 'Dude Japan' and the other stories is the old Maxx, not the new one.)

WE NEED BLACK & WHITE FAN ART! We've been getting too much color stuff and not enough b/w. I'm wise to why you send in color—going for that Big Back Cover in the Sky—but your odds of getting printed improve astronomically if you send in b/w.

Kool things to Konsume (here's where I sell stuff blah blah blah): (1) Todd's Maxx toy is out and awesome. Most come with a black is; keep your peepers peeled for the rarer white ones in some packages. Thanks to Todd and his Crew for such an outstanding job! (2) Homage's Maxx trading cards featuring other artists are out/look spiffy/have done well. (3) Best of all, the damn tapes will be available from Sony at the end of April—check yer video stores. This is a chance for everyone who doesn't have MTV to say, "What the heck was all the fuss about?"



Sam Kieth,

After reading Issue 21, I was again lost in this plot, which I finally grasped about Issues 17-18. However, please don't feel the need to explain, 'cause I like reading each issue and figuring out the plot for myself. I'm sure it will be spectacular...

Thanks,
Stacy R,
Lake Ozark, MO

Never mind, Lucy.

Sam,

I felt hesitant about a new Maxx, but after reading #21 I'm still hooked. Possibly more so. I like Sara's look, the near-future setting, the CIA thing and Mr. Go- uh, Artie, he's twice as interesting now. The atmosphere reminds me a little of Brazil (the movie). Is Terry Gilliam an influence? Maybe you influenced him! The art is beautiful. I just hope horsie Maxx will have comparable shoe size to bunny Maxx. I mean, he's gotta be a Clydesdale, right? Also, the new cards are very cool and the figure is incredible! One store was selling it for $20. Should I wait?

Ark Ran Ski
Pasadena, CA

Hey Sam,

First things first. In Issue 19, you printed that I live in Olney, MO when I really live in Olney, MD! Alright, now that that's cleared up, I have to say I loved Issue 21! It was so cool to see Sara and Mr. Gone in the year 2005. In this issue, Mr. Gone tells Sara that this Mr. Gone character was all made up.

WHAT THE HELL? Yeah, right. **[Sara doesn't buy it either.]** Sara should have a better apartment. I think Norbert is Sara's Maxx. Why are you taking so long to come out with new Maxx comics? I bet you five bucks you won't print this, but I don't have five bucks! Ha ha ha ha!

See ya,
Todd Killick
Olney, Maryland

P.S. Put a lava lamp in the comic, and I live in MARYLAND.

WHOA!

Hold on here. Are you trying to tell me in Issue 21 that the things that happened in issues #1-20 never happened (according to the prune-faced Gone). And what about what Julie was about to say in #20. And her baby. You better make up your homework in later issues, Boy.

Keep up the brainwashing,
Cy
Puyallup, WA

Lu-cy...Sam's got some 'splainin' to do...

Dear Sam,

I just picked up Issue 21 and at first it scared me, it was too much to handle. I thought it over and realized, "Hey, wait—I just love this stuff. Why am I worrying?" So now I obviously have some questions.

1. I thought Artemis was a blob of brain goo on Julie's ceiling.
2. Why doesn't he talk all cool anymore (underlined vowels)?
3. Where is Julie and her baby?
4. Where did all the isz go?
5. Will we ever see Maxx or Dave or whatever the hell you call him?
6. Is Norbert the guy who stepped on the banana slug?

Your fan,
Brandon Aylward
Simi Valley, CA

1. Yeah—ten years ago. He recovered.
2. Because Mike Heisler was REALLY sick of going back and underlining all the vowels. He rebelled. I have no control...
3. Be patient.
4. Think parallel—this is Sara's outback, not Julie's.
5. Good question.
6. No. Norbert's the name of Sara's childhood rocking horse.

Dear Sam,

Just when I thought I had The Maxx figured out, you do this. I didn't know what was going to happen when you moved ten years into the future. I guess it's turned out to be another puzzle.

In Issue 21, Gone (aka Artie) tells Sara (aka Sarah) that she created the image of him being Gone in her head. How is it possible that Sara created Gone in her head when he rapes Julie, fights The Maxx and is seen by just about everyone in the book as Mr. Gone BEFORE Sara is even introduced to The Maxx. Either Artie is lying, or you screwed something up.

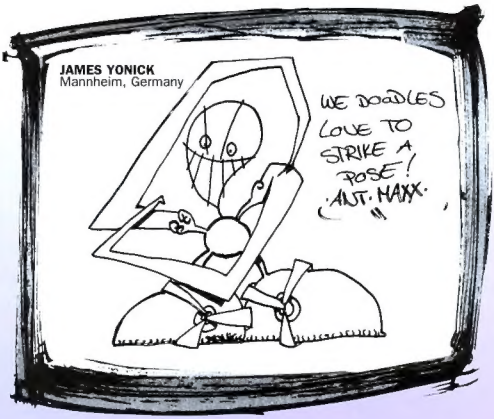
Sincerely,
Sean Miller
Shelburne, MA

(Usually both—) Actually, there are two Gones. Julie's is a villain who did all the stuff you said. But what if your dad did something really bad? He's still your dad, and you love him. That's Sara's Gone—and Sara's dilemma.

Dear Sam,

So Gone was just a projection of Julie/Sara(h)/Dave/Artie's (and Sam's) subconscious...that explains how he know their minds, and why he couldn't die, and why he couldn't do magic like the real Artie can. Some of y'all may not like the horse/Sara thing, but I think it roxx. And Dave's totem animal is a fish, right? (#14) Fish are cool.

The cover of #21 rulz. I wonder if Sara inherited Artie's magic like Julie inherited her mon's vision...kuul. #40-60 should be where Dave finally gets through his Outback, maybe with lots of moral support from Julie and Sara...except Julie might mess him up worse, huh...



Peace and stuff
Dave (the other Dave)
Saline, MI

I'm not complex enough to have a subconscious.

Dear Sam and the rest of you Maxx makers,

I really love your book. My intense liking of this comic leads me to only one avenue of behavior, and that is to scrutinize—I'm funny that way. So, the following questions about Issue #21 are half things I am curious about, and half passive aggressive ways of pointing out what I believe to be flaws in your story.

1. Didn't Sara's Dad kill himself?
2. Don't you think it's odd that Sara grew up to have the same exact body as Julie?
3. Why does the cover have nothing to do with the story?
4. How did Sara go from wearing all black to pink bunny slippers?
5. Why does Sara's spirit animal look like Julie's?
6. Why did the letter column refer to Sara's spirit animal as The Maxx?
7. Do you think it would be possible to throw an is or two into this new story? (I've kind of become attached to the little fellows.)

Sincerely, someone who would love to climb in your ear and swim in your synapses,
Patrick T. MacBlain

1. No, and this ish explains why.
2. Not when the artist only knows how to draw one body.
3. Actually, the story has nothing to do with the cover.
4. Hey—it was a dream. Sara only dreamt she wore bunny slippers, etc.
5/6. Every spirit animal is named The Maxx—they're just different animals behind the mask.
7. Sorry—the exploding fairies will have to hold you for a bit.

And you stay the heck OUT of my synapses.

Dear Maxx writers,

I haven't read or watched The Maxx for a long

time because the show scared me a little. On MTV, there was a lot of cussing in The Maxx, and I think that's unnecessary. And a whole lot of weirdness. I can't comprehend anything that goes on very much. It's just too strange. The weird thing about all of this is, I actually LIKE the show and the comic. Funky.

I recently bought #21, and I have to admit, it was good. Very good. Sara(h) finding out her father was Mr. Gone sent shivers down my spine. How was her father ever Mr. Gone? Reincarnation? I'm not sure. And just who are those CIA agents? What do they want? And where the heck is Maxx when you need him?

This is all too suspenseful for me, but I like it. The only thing I don't like is.....why can't the world get along in the year 2005 in your comic? It seems that it's gotten worse. I have nothing against different peoples of different cultures. I think it's sad that in the future we'd be fighting with the Mexicans. I hope this never happens—we may be fighting WWIII if this violence and mayhem keep up.

A picky fan,
Elizabeth Berndt
Martinsville, IN

Alan Moore, who wrote most of #21, is noted for being a horror writer and for writing bleak visions of a totalitarian, futuristic society. That's why his issue of Maxx may have seemed a little darker than our usual fare.

Sam Kieth,

Wow! Maxx #21 kicked butt! Being a poor college student, I have never been able to read something of Alan Moore's (The Maxx is the closest I get to reading a super-hero title). This has been the best issue since you introduced Sara(h) to the readers. The CIA agents were like a cross between Jules and Vincent of Pulp Fiction, and Mulder and Scully of X-Files. It was very cool. The inner story about nicotine and food was reflective of this future, along with the social reforms of the welfare system. I think Norbert might have some connection to um...

Anyway, Alan Moore has just upped the par of your book. Either bring Alan back (I love it) or kidnap him, lock him into a basement, and feed him Pez 'til he submits these full-blown scripts he is capable of.

I want Alan!
Gabriel Siqueiros
Modesto, CA

Alan definitely rocks. But locking Alan in the basement and feeding him Pez is pretty much how we treated him in the first place—actually it's how we treated all our staff around here...

Alan did more on the first 14 pages than on the rest of the issue, since the direction of the book forced his ending to be amended. He is great to work with, and I hope we can do it again. I appreciate the creative boost he gave the book.

By the way, from here on out, Norbert and Maxx are pretty much interchangeable terms...

Dear Sam and The Maxx,

Got a kick out of The Maxx #21. So that's how the CIA of the year 2005 AD is depicted. What was strange about this issue was that some of the characters remind me of some "spooks" I used to work with during my days with the US Army's MI (Military Intelligence) in Seoul, Korea. During a "real world" situation in Korea, we had to hobnob with some Korean CIA guys, some regular American CIA guys, and a few DIA/NSA guys. They were a barrel of laughs and their personality is a lot like the characters depicted in The Maxx. Couldn't believe it. I guess even in the year 2005 AD, spooks will still be spooks.

Ex-spook signing off,
Paul Dale Roberts
Sacramento, CA

Dear Mr. Kieth,

I think you should give John Foster Parnes, Glynn Franklin, Larry Mattox, Irwin Rosteval, and The Wall their very own series because they kick ass. They are just too damn funny for words. I love 'em. Please give them a series.

Alex Goodmalloy
Annapolis, MD

Gee—Gone used them for fish bait. Oh well. But keep your eyes peeled for more of Major Rosteval, the gay ghost in Sara's urn.

Dear Sam,

Hi! It's me again. The Maxx 2 which I was referring is Julie's rabbit. I'm not quite used 2 Maxx being a horse. I'll need 2 accept him as a horse B-4 I make love to him. Who would want 2 exchange body fluids w/a bum named Dave?

So what's the verdict? Can Maxx procreate or what?? I NEED 2 KNOW!

Rita
Newark, DE

How about it, folks—can he?

Dear Maxx people,

#21 was great! I can't wait to see Sara's outback. And let me guess, Norbert The Nag is the new Maxx, right?

It's pretty cool seeing Gone in a whole new view. And seeing Sara a little bit older. But I have a few questions regarding #21-30:

1. Who the hell is Steve?
2. When will we see that 300-lb banana slug?
3. Will the Dave/Maxx and Julie be around in current issues?
4. What will issues #31 and up be about?

I'm having trouble finding back issues of The Maxx. Help!

C-ya!
Danny Fasold
Manassas, VA

1. **See this issue.**
2. **See last issue.**
3. **Soon.**
4. **We're going past 30? My hand hurts, & so does my brain.**
5. **The back ish dilemma is solved two ways: (1) Head to Head, and (2) trade paperbacks. The first trade (issues 1-6) will be reprinted soon. Issues 7-11, the second trade, will be released in June or July.**

Dear Sam,

From a storyline analysis, the characters repre-

sent so much of what we see in this life. I really relate to Sarah, from a pretty crappy childhood full of name-calling and social isolation, and how real her pain and confusion (as well as sarcastic mouth) are transferred. Julie was a great accomplishment; I disagree with the arguments of sexism, etc. She was a strong woman in a shi**y situation who dealt with the pain and shame as many others of us do...by burying it deep within ourselves until it leaks out in oozing trails to finger the boarded-up windows of our sanity. Excellent! And Maxx, well, caught in the middle with a loss of identity because he attempts to save others—how true!.

You guys are the greatest.
Keep it up—all of it!
Jennifer and Ed
Allston, MA

Sam Kieth,
Why is the Maxx called The Maxx?
Steve Clark,
Collegeville, PA

That has never been revealed. There are some things we just do not need to know.

Sam and all the wonderful producers of Maxx,
Ish #21 brought me pretty damn close to tears, not just the story but the letters in Maxx Traxx. You guys convey humans so well, you show that everyone is different and that sometimes society isn't too accepting of these differences. You also show how experiences shape who a person is, and how a person is. You have approached and related a very traumatic experience in many people's lives (mostly women), which is rape. It is not a good thing and very scary, but you have shown how horrible it really is. You turned rape from a word into a horrible thing for me. That is an amazing thing, and it's so great to know it came from men, too.

Thanks,
Jenny
Nashville, TN

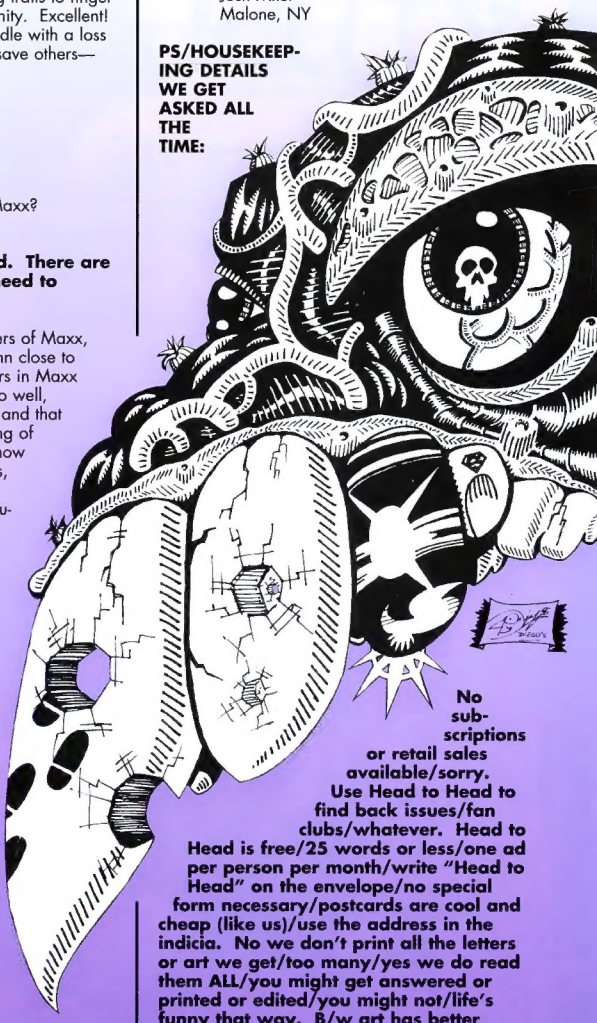
Thanxx.

Dear Sam,
I enjoyed #21 a lot, even though I was expecting to see Sara's outback in the first issue. I guess we sort of got to see her Maxx, though...I guess I can wait a little longer to see the banana slug.
Trying to address the topic of Artie Pender could take up an entire thesis, so I won't even try. My friends and I will often have discussions about comics, but we generally talk about what we think is wrong with them. And discussions we have about The Maxx do revolve around the meaning(s) in it, but we don't like to over-analyze it because that would take away the fun. So, this is one area of the book that I will gladly leave in your hands. I enjoy being part of the book as much as anyone else, but what makes the book so enjoyable is your vision. That's what led all of us here in the first place. And I shouldn't leave out everyone else who works on the book. I don't know if they get as much credit as they should, but they should.

Thanks,
Josh Miler
Malone, NY

DIEGO JOURDAN
Santiago, Chile

PS/HOUSEKEEPING DETAILS WE GET ASKED ALL THE TIME:



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D.E. HOLMES
Valley, Alabama

RENE PFITZNER
Melbourne, Australia